

***DOE Commission
on Fire Safety and
Preparedness***

**Subcommittee #3 – Emergency Response
and Evaluation of Spread and Fire
Fighting Risks
Conference Call #3
Key Discussion Items and Notes
March 16, 2001**

Key Discussion Items and Notes

The following is a brief summary of **key discussion items and notes** from the third conference call of Subcommittee #3 – Emergency Response and Evaluation of Spread and Fire Fighting Risks held March 16, 2001. Conference call participants are listed at the end of these notes. Conference call was chaired by Garry Briese.

Next conference call of the Subcommittee is targeted for the **Friday, March 30 at 11:30am**. Conference call number will be provided by e-mail closer to the date of the call.

Key Discussion Items:

- Frank Russo spoke to four key items before the Subcommittee began their discussions. Items were:
 - The Draft Agenda for the next full committee meeting scheduled April 23, 2001 in Augusta Georgia in conjunction with the DOE Fire Protection Workshop, and the tour of Savannah River Site (SRS).
 - Site Visit to Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico.
 - Comments on the Department of Energy Facility Fire Safety Review Draft Evaluation Plan.
 - Update on controlled burn at Y-12 Oak Ridge site.

See discussion notes below for details.

Next Steps of The Subcommittee were discussed as follows:

- Consolidate Subcommittee comments on Draft Evaluation Plan and provide them to Subcommittee Chair by March 26 so he can forward to Frank at DOE by March 30th.
- Make travel arrangements with Alvensa Travel (888) 293-6165 and Hotel arrangement with the Sheraton Augusta (706) 855-8100 for Second Public Meeting in Augusta, GA.
- Set up a conference call with LANL and send revised Agenda of LANL visit to all Subcommittee members.
- Compare Initial Joint Review Scope with Subcommittee #3 Scope.

Discussion Notes.

- **Agenda Items Discussions:**

1. April 23 Second Public Meeting

Attendees at April 23rd Second Public Meeting include: Steve Cozen (colleague Bob Bass), Jack Snell (colleague Dave Evans), Dan Arnold, Paul Croce, Eric Lamar, Debra McBaugh, Lorlee Mizell, Tony O'Neill, John Till, and Andrea Tuttle.

Those not attending the April 23rd Second Public Meeting include: Jessie Roberson, Kathleen Almand, Garry Briese, Ken Burris, Michael Freeman, and Eleanor Towns.

The goal of the Second Public Meeting is to learn about DOE program office activities, Mission, Hazards, and protection schemes. There will be representatives from DOE Headquarters from the Office of Environmental Management, Office of Science, Defense Programs, Office of Environment, Safety and Health, and the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. There will be a round robin question period, and time for fulfilling Commission activities and goals -- where you're heading and where you should go from here.

2. Savannah River Site (SRS) Complex

- The day following the Second Public Meeting, the Commission Members have been invited to participate in a tour of the Savannah River Site (SRS Complex). Details of the tour are as follows: Two buses will leave the hotel at 7:30 a.m. and return to the hotel at 5:00 p.m.
- The buses will visit the following facilities but not simultaneously: The SRS Operations Center; Savannah River Ecology Laboratory; the USDA Forest Service-Savannah River; Lunch at the SRS cafeteria, Emergency Operations Center; Alternate EOC, N-Area Fire Station, Tour of Prescribed Burn Areas, Fire Alarm Systems Training Lab at Aiken Tech Institute.

3. Los Alamos National Laboratory Site Visit (LANL)

Travel and Agenda

- There is a planned visit to LANL for interested Commission Members for May 21-24, 2001.
- Reservations may be made by April 20th at the Hotel Loretto in Santa Fe at the government rate of \$90.00 for May 21-24, (505) 800-727-5531.
- DOE will badge members at hotel after 1pm so an ID must be provided.
- The following information pertains:
Agenda: Monday, May 21, is a Travel day. That night is reserved for, logistics (badging, etc.) and site orientation. Tuesday, May 22, there will be a Briefing at LANL on the LANL Fire Protection Program; The Year 2000 Cerro Grande Fire lessons learned, post-fire emergency preparedness enhancements, ongoing site fire safety initiatives, and critical (fire safety) issues.
Tuesday evening there will be a site tour of wildlands showing fire damage, recovery and remediation activities. Wednesday, May 23, TA-53 (Beam line) visit at the LANL Fire Station 1.
Wednesday evening, TA-48 (Radionuclide Facility), TA-3 Building 66 (Sigma Building).
Thursday, May 24, TA-18 (Plutonium Storage) at LANL TA-55. Thursday evening is

reserved for travel. The Agenda will be finalized and will include additional meetings as suggested by Subcommittee members when possible.

- These areas at LANL were chosen to reveal diversity of Mission and unique hazards, comprehensive features and give a good look at a cross section of facilities.

Subcommittee Comments on LANL visit:

- This Subcommittee expressed a desire to interact and to coordinate with local government officials. They feel the need to talk to other parties to get full picture perception of Fire incident problems.
- This Subcommittee suggests talking with John Parker of the New Mexico Fire Department regarding fire follow-on activities. Some areas of interest include: Integrated Fire Risk Analysis Team (IFRAT) the lab, the Department. of Health, etc – Jim Bearzi. Pueblos may be interested Santa Clara and San Alphonso. Subcommittee #4 needs to hear concerns outside lab with respect to fire, but we also need to balance other subcommittee's interests.
- One of the aspects the Subcommittee is pushing is not just fire within the boundaries of the facility, but also fire outside the facility boundaries. Wildland fires are coming into facilities, so relationship with BLM, Forest Service, city councils are important.
- All agreed that the Commission's visit is important to communities and how fire is being addressed is very important to Los Alamos. The Commission would like to set up some time to talk with communities, but this cannot be a Public Meeting. Dick Burik, who works for John Brown (Associate Director of the Lab) is Director of Operations at Los Alamos and John knows him.
- DOE will talk with colleagues first and will try to schedule a conference call with Los Alamos to request inclusion of a community visit.

4. Comments on DOE Draft Evaluation Plan

- Subcommittee #4 wants to see more emphasis on pre, during and post fires as well as adding Rocky Flats or other site visit to examine prescribed burn issue there.
- DOE suggests waiting to see what happens with Implementation Plans and 60-day study. If not satisfied, then DOE may go to Rocky Flats, but something else would fall off schedule, possibly Brookhaven.
- This Subcommittee expressed a concern regarding site contracts because the way they deal with fires is different. They would like to see a copy of a contract section that deals with fire and fire safety.
- There is concern that contracts are order driven, but need to focus on requirements. The breakdown is in the implementation. There's vulnerability or a gap between contract (implementation) and accountability.
- DOE state that the problem is that contracts delineate requirements with NFPA Standards, and not all criteria address staffing, etc., so there are gaps in coverage. Oakridge addresses some adequacy issues. Some Subcontractors do not address hazard analysis.
- This Subcommittee suggests giving Fire Chiefs on-site the assistance they need and focusing on policy changes that need to be made for site management contracts. DOE requirements should be detailed.
- The Subcommittee needs to develop recommendations to the Secretary with a policy statement to review these disconcerting "issues" and how to remedy them.
- The Subcommittee wants DOE to DRAFT a policy statement and Subcommittee #3 will review.
- The Subcommittee should focus on 2 tracks: problems we know of today and how do we help the infrastructure so we don't do this in 2 years. The latter is not as focused.
- Possible focus on utility to establish the adequacy of firefighting forces and what is done

correctly and incorrectly.

- The Subcommittee is concerned that there is no new issues to focus on: inadequate staffing, marginal expenses, and shifting of resources are all known issues. Most problems have been discovered, discussed and dismissed.
- Subcommittee must identify other, more subtle issues or identify the problems even if already identified in the past; work on identification, and solutions, develop policy and make recommendations. Contract needs good linkage to the application.
- The Subcommittee suggests having DOE identify people who are doing the work correctly, and present a working, more realistic model.
- Sometimes the flexibility given on the contract can make the difference and some field contracts are contractor to contractor, but should provide flexibility to address problems. This must be added to the Plan.
- DOE emphasizes the fact that budgeting priorities to get things funded is important part.
- The Subcommittee believes that fire protection funding has taken a back seat to fire safety clean up (see page 8 of Draft Evaluation Plan).
- The Subcommittee needs to identify the problems and look at what's in Initial Joint Review, and look at scope in Draft Evaluation Plan that addresses some of the issues. Pick out key elements. Concerns about staffing inadequacy at sites and other topical areas and look at strategy to validate it. Maybe further research, survey, and spot check may be necessary.
- DOE suggest identifying problems by talking to actual chiefs and engineers that know where the problems are (SRS tour will identify some of these issues).
- At First Public Meeting the Commission did identify these problems: i.e., staffing. We need a meaningful solution, so enhanced contractual commitment may be needed. What are we doing that will stick and help ensure that the infrastructure will work and can change.
- DOE suggests a possible solution is long-term sufficiency, a set of comprehensive requirements, all criteria integrated into contracts to ensure effective oversight.
- Currently, DOE does not have a Comprehensive Oversight program.

5. Oak Ridge Y-12 Incident Update

Frank provided the Subcommittee with an update of his visit to the Oak Ridge Y-12 site and results of his inquiry into a recent controlled burn that was briefly "out of control." His report is summarized below:

- The incident took place on February 8 at Oak Ridge Y-12 when they were building a landfill and doing some clearing & grubbing using diesel fuel. There were 5 piles burning, and a couple piles on the ridgeline had embers get into the slash of woodland and got a bit out of control and created about a 2-acre fire.
- Response activities were very good, so luckily there was no serious damage. Activity Hazard Analysis did not address having water trucks on site. There was a privatized contract with DuraTek. (M&I is with Bechtel Jacobs). Contract oversees, design and construction, and operations. CH2M Hill had design and construction was with Avisco for clearing & grubbing.
- A lot of players were involved with many responsibilities, but some roles were not well defined. Oakridge Forest Management Group should have been consulted. Avisco sent bulldozer operators to fight firebreaks before Incident Commander was on site without PPE or proper training. Activity Hazard Analysis did not identify what size clear space or buffer should be established and there was no analysis on weather or wind directions, or provision for an out of control fire.
- No proper training or defined job responsibilities were indicated. The day before, Oakridge facility representative did not have fire watches. When event occurred they were there, but had collateral duties. They used pit burn, forced air blowers – contrast

between both. Incident Command from Y-12 showed up and responders worked well to contain fire.

- National Weather Service provided forecasts to EOC but not to scene. This activity did not fall in Moratorium, but in the future DOE would like additional guidance for prescribed vs. operational burns and still need proper safeguards in place like Hazard Analysis.
- Confusion on prescribed vs. controlled vs. operational. Each must take the proper safety precautions. There's a need for 1 point of contact:--Fire Chief on-sight. Hazard assessments – responsibility is defused. Contrast between privatized and conventional contract. Pit burn forced air blower and water truck were on sight, but no subject matter experts were used. They didn't work with Oakridge Fire Management Group. Lessons Learned will be issued to the Secretary as issue guidance to alleviate confusion between prescribed and operational.
- Frank will get a detailed report regarding the Y-12 incident to Commission Members when it is made final.

Next Conference Call

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Conference Call Participants

- Commission Members
 - Garry Briese, Subcommittee Chair
 - Mike Freeman
 - Eric Lamar
 - Lorlee Mizell
 - Jessie Roberson, Commission Co-Chair
- U.S. Department of Energy
 - Frank Russo, Designated Federal Official
 - Barbie Harshman, Federal Assistant
 - Dennis Kubicki, Senior Fire Protection Engineer
- RPI
 - Bill Hamilton
 - Melinda Watters